

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

160824Z Apr 06

UNCLAS AMMAN 002669

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/EX, AND HR/OE/PE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AFSN](#) [APER](#) [AMGT](#) [KSEP](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: AMMAN'S NOMINATION FOR 2005 DEPARTMENT FSN
OF THE YEAR AWARD

1. THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN AMMAN, JORDAN IS PROUD TO NOMINATE PROTOCOL ASSISTANT MAHA KALAJI FOR THE 2006 FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONAL OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING LIAISON WITH HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS WHICH FACILITATED THE WORK OF THE AMERICAN OFFICERS AND THE GOALS OF THE MISSION. MS. KALAJI IS A FSN-8 AND HAS BEEN EMPLOYED BY THE EMBASSY UNDER A PERSONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR ALMOST 3 YEARS.

Ms. Kalaji's position is particularly vital to our mission here in Jordan, and she has repeatedly demonstrated what an invaluable asset she is to the entire Embassy.

Liaison with the Royal Palace/GOJ: Due to its importance as a regional hub and its role as a support center for Iraq, Embassy Amman is literally awash with VIP visitors. From members of Congress, to four-star generals, to senior State Department officials, there is a never-ending stream of visitors to Amman, all of whom wish to meet with the King and/or Jordanian cabinet ministers. These meeting requests are at the top of the Embassy's priority list as they are essential to increasing U.S. understanding of the region, maintaining strong US-Jordan relations, and facilitating the goals of the mission. When we receive such meeting requests, Maha is the one that everyone, including the Front Office, calls to make the meetings happen. She enjoys direct access to senior government figures and is literally the "lifeline" between the Embassy and the palace in trying to arrange meetings with King Abdullah. This means far more than a phone call. Given the number of visitors, the incredibly tight schedules of all involved, and the inevitable last-minute changes, Maha is often in hourly contact with the royal court, including on weekends and when she is out of the country! On more than one occasion, her diligence and outstanding interpersonal skills have managed to salvage meetings that would have otherwise been canceled due to late airplane arrivals, traffic problems, and people just plain running late. The Embassy simply could not cope with its visitor workload without her.

Outreach and representation: The Front Office here in Amman maintains a very active schedule, from large receptions to small dinners, to consolidate relations with important contacts and to increase understanding of American foreign policy interests. Thanks to her incredible knowledge of Jordanian culture and personalities, Maha knows exactly who to invite no matter what the occasion or subject. If there is an event centered on the arts, for example, Maha can almost instantly come up with a list of prominent singers, painters, writers and dancers, along with their contact information. On the political front, it is quite astounding at how many noteworthy Jordanians she can recommend for representational activities. It seems that she knows every current and former minister in the country! She also knows who gets along - or doesn't get along - with whom, so as to ensure that the mix of guests will get along smoothly. Thanks to Maha, our outreach activities reach the appropriate audience and our limited representational funds are used effectively.

Other duties: Arranging meetings and representational events at Embassy Amman would keep just about any person busy full-time. But Maha does much more. She receives, translates, and sends diplomatic notes. She uses her incredible network of contacts to provide invaluable information on political and other themes. And just as important, her hospitality, willingness to help, and warm personality help keeps morale in the Political Section - and elsewhere in the Embassy - high. Despite the incredible stress she faces, Maha always has a smile and a kind word for everyone she sees. This combination of devotion to her work, outstanding abilities, and strong interpersonal skills make her uniquely qualified to represent Embassy Amman as its nominee for the 2006 FSN of the Year Award.

2. THE EMPLOYEE'S POSITION DESCRIPTION AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR THE POSITION WERE THOROUGHLY REVIEWED BY THE JOINT COUNTRY AWARDS COMMITTEE. THE COMMITTEE CERTIFIED THAT THE EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE OF ALL IMPORTANT JOB ELEMENTS SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEEDED NORMAL REQUIREMENTS.

